PLEASE KEEP THIS IN SIGHT UNTIL ANSWERED.

The Cowles Genealogy.

3141 P St. N. W.,
WASHINGTON, D. C., January, 1894.

To the Cowles Family and Descendants:

About three years ago the writer conceived the idea of compiling and publishing a genealogical history of the Cowles family in America, believing that abundant data could be found if a systematic effort were made. Such has proved to be the fact, the materials now on hand embracing a copy of a manuscript genealogy of the descendants of John Cowles, the emigrant, more or less complete in all the branches down to about 1850; another, somewhat similar, with family tree (copy of tree enclosed herewith) of about same date; one of the Southington branch, one of the Massachusetts branch, and a large number of records of smaller branches and of individual families. Much interesting data has also been obtained from a search through church, town, county, state and national records, and histories. Reference to these authorities will be noted in the genealogy, which will be of special aid and value to those desiring to join patriotic societies by virtue of their descent from ancestors who have performed military or civil service.

My task has been much lightened and simplified by the discovery of the manuscript genealogies referred to, and by the hearty co-operation and interest manifested by all members and descendants upon whom I have called for information. Due credit will be given to each, by name, in the preface to the Genealogy.

About all that now remains to be done is to complete the records from 1850 to the present time, but those previous to that date are also desired to verify existing, or supply missing data. If done now this should prove not only possible but comparatively easy. Members and descendants are earnestly requested to send me as soon as practicable so much of the following information as may be known to them:

1. Names in full of all descendants, both male and female. 2. Dates and places of births, marriages and deaths. 3. Places of residence. 4. Where educated. 5. Occupations or professions. 6. Military or civil services. 7. Politics and religion. 8. Physical characteristics, such as height, weight, complexion, color of hair and eyes, etc. 9. Any other facts worthy of note. 10. The same information concerning persons marrying into the Cowles family, together with an account of their parentage and ancestry, if known,

Family photographs are also solicited for insertion in the genealogy.

The book when completed will contain several hundred pages, and the records of several thousand descendants, and will be sold by subscription. The price cannot be estimated at this time, but will be announced hereafter, and all who desire the book will be given an opportunity to subscribe for it. All are requested, however, to furnish their records whether they intend to subscribe for the book or not, as the main object is to make it complete.

It will contain the records of the descendants of the daughters also, as far as known.

This circular will be sent to over 500 members and descendants. Each is requested to send me his or her own record, at least, and as much other information as known, and ask other descendants to do the same. The addresses of all persons likely to be interested in the family history are desired. Additional copies of the tree will be supplied upon request.

John Cowles, the emigrant, is supposed to be the progenitor of all bearing that name in America except the descendants, not numerous, of three brothers, Thomas, John and Henry Cowles, who came from England to James City County, Va., about 1740. (The descendants are requested to send me their records for publication as a separate branch of the family.) John Cowles was born in England, and came to Hartford, Conn., about 1636; was one of the first settlers of Farmington, Conn., in 1640; deacon and pillar of the church; Member of the General Court or Legislature of Connecticut; constable and townsman, all offices of honor in those days. He was one of the first settlers of Hadley, Mass., in 1659, and of Hatfield, Mass., in 1661, where he died in 1675. His widow, Hannah, died in Hartford in 1683. Both left wills. They had two sons, Samuel and John, and five daughters, all of whom married well and have worthy descendants at the present time. Samuel remained in Farmington, while John accompanied his parents to Massachusetts. They are the progenitors of the Connecticut and Massachusetts branches of the family, respectively.

The name is spelled in almost every conceivable way in the early records of Connecticut and Massachusetts, and there is a tradition that John Cowles changed his name from Cole to Cowles to distinguish his family from that of another John Cole in the same town, this originating the name Cowles. There are several branches of the Cowles family in England at the present time whose ancestors appear to have been there for many generations, indicating that the name is an ancient one and in existence before John Cowles was born. It is more than probable that he did not change his name as supposed, but that all the confusion has resulted from its pronunciation (Kōlz) and the little attention that was paid to spelling in early days.

Lord Lindsay, an eminent English genealogist, says:

"Every family should have a record of its own; each has its peculiar spirit running through the whole line, and, in more or less development, perceptible in every generation. Rightly viewed as a most powerful but much neglected instrument of education, I can imagine no study more rife with pleasure and instruction than genealogy. Nor need our ancestors have been Scipios or Fabii to interest us in their fortunes. We do not love our kindred for their glory or their genius, but for those domestic affections and private virtues that, unobserved by the world, expand in confidence towards ourselves and often root themselves, like the banyan of the East, and flourish with independent vigor in the heart to which a kind Providence has guided them. And why should we not derive equal benefit from studying the virtues of our forefathers? An affectionate regard for their memory is natural to the heart; it is an emotion totally distinct from pride, an ideal love, free from that consciousness of requited affection and reciprocal esteem which constitutes so much of the satisfaction we derive from the love of the living. They are denied, it is true, to our personal acquaintance, but the light they shed during their lives survives within their tombs, and will reward our search if we explore them. * * * And if the virtues of strangers be so attractive to us, how infinitely more so should be those of our own kindred, and with what additional energy should the precepts of our parents influence us, when we trace transmission of those precepts, from father to son, through successive generations, each bearing the testimony of a virtuous, useful, honorable life to their truth and influence."

"Those who do not treasure up the memory of their ancestors, do not deserve to be remembered by posterity," says Sir Edmund Burke.

"Man passes away; his name perishes from record and recollection; his history is as a tale that is told, and his very monument becomes a ruin."

The foregoing remarks of Lord Lindsay apply with special force to the Cowles family, as there are few families in which both physical and mental characteristics have been so persistently transmitted from generation to generation; few in which family pride and love of kindred are more strongly developed, and none whose name is borne by fewer distinct families. As a result its traditions and records have been preserved and handed down from generation to generation; but they are widely scattered and in constant danger of becoming lost. It is the mission of the writer to gather together and publish them in order that they may be preserved and made accessible to all who are interested in them. The measure of his success will depend largely on the assistance and co-operation of the family in whose interest the task is undertaken. Let us hope that it may be complete.

Fraternally yours,

CALVIN DUVALL[9] COWLES.

(Calvin Josiah[8], Josiah[7], Calvin[6], Josiah[5], Thomas[4], Samuel[3], Samuel[2], John[1].)

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